

**COTTON ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

**March 11, 2008**

The meeting was called to order by Clerk Sandi Nelson at approximately 8:38 p.m. in the Community Center, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 15 townspeople present. List on file with the clerk in the township office.

The clerk opened the floor for nominations for a moderator of the meeting. Dennis Olsen motioned, supported by Terry Nelson to nominate LaVerne Leuelling as moderator. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED. Are there any other nominations 2 x's. Janis Wendell motioned, supported by Terry Nelson that the nominations be closed. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED. LaVerne Leuelling was elected moderator of the meeting. The moderator read the order of business for the annual meeting.

The clerk's 2007 annual town meeting and public hearing minutes were read. Ken Meinke motioned supported by Will Deyo to accept the 2007 annual meeting and public hearing minutes as read. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

A copy of the 2007 Treasurer's Financial Report was distributed with the agenda. Balances in the funds as of 12/31/2007:

|                                      |                     |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| GENERAL FUND                         | \$ 11,136.28        |
| NON-LEVY REVENUE FUND                | 129,597.46          |
| ROAD & BRIDGE FUND                   | 22,617.78           |
| CHRONICLE FUND                       | 13,253.24           |
| CEMETERY\OLD FUND                    | 6,269.53            |
| CEMETERY\NEW FUND                    | 11,417.23           |
| COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND           | 6,940.36            |
| PARKS & REC FUND                     | 5,588.81            |
| FIRE FUND                            | 30,603.83           |
| FIRE TRUCK FUND                      | 13,144.69           |
| CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND                | 4,769.87            |
| CP SUBORDINATE SERVICE DISTRICT FUND | <u>(-87,873.71)</u> |
| BALANCE ON HAND:                     | \$ 167,465.37       |

|                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| TOTAL RECEIPT       | \$231,473.02 |
| TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS | \$149,166.39 |

|                                      |                 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| INVESTMENTS: CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSITS | \$49,264.77     |
| INVESTMENTS INTEREST:                | <u>1,999.63</u> |
| TOTAL INVESTMENTS VALUE:             | \$51,264.40     |

Included in the agenda packet is a report regarding the 2007 state and county funds received. George Nelson motioned, supported by Will Deyo that the 2007 Treasurer's Financial Report be approved as presented. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED. Financial Report on file in the township office.

Review of 2007 activities.

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Community Center: Dennis Olsen reported that new lighting was installed in the hall area and post office. Purchased two new computers. Future plans include a new roof and flooring.

Lakeview Cemetery: Terry Nelson reported that groundskeeper Harland Averill retired and the new groundskeeper is Steve Gray. The sexton is Bryan Tracy. As it has been planned for the past few years, we hope to have work done in the new section of the cemetery.

Chronicle: Sandi Nelson reported that the Chronicle is doing well. The Chronicle purchased one of the new computers that Dennis Olsen spoke of. The Chronicle keeps doing well because of all the support and donations received.

Fire Department: Constance Johnston, Volunteer Fire Department, reviewed the 2007 activities, training, equipment, runs financial statement and goals for 2008. The CVFD would like to thank the Town Board and the citizens of Cotton for their continuing support. There are 24 active members, of these 14 are First Responders and emergency medical technicians (EMT's). The CVFD responded to 41 emergency calls of which 26 were EMS calls and 15 were Fire and Fire related. Mutual Aid accounted for 11 of these calls. Accomplishments during 2007 include: Re-evaluation and revamping the constitution and by-laws of the CVFD; members continue with training; begin construction of a storage shed. CVFD participates in Fire Prevention Week at the school, provides EMS readiness at the Annual State Fiddle Contest and Festival, sponsors the annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Dinner, and assists with the flooding of the Cotton ice rink. Goals for 2008 include: application for a FEMA grant; continued training for all members; completion of the storage shed. Attached is the CVFD Response Breakdown, Equipment List, and Year-end Financial Report for 2007. The CVFD respectfully requests \$24,000 for the 2008 contract year. Ken Meinke expressed his thanks to the Fire Department.

Parks & Rec: Debbie Leppala reported that the Park is doing well. There were four students working as attendants at the ice rink this year. The new groundskeeper has flooded the rink a few times and would like to thank the CVFD for flooding and getting the ice base on the rink. Future plans include working on the playground equipment to get it repainted, put woodchips under the equipment, and paint the warming shack. The Parks & Rec worked at the Fiddle Festival Friday and Saturday in 2007. We do need volunteers for the 2008 festival. Terry Nelson wanted to thank Debbie Leppala for all her years of spear heading the kitchen and help for the fiddle festival as Debbie is retiring from that volunteer position.

Roads: Will Deyo reported that the roads required a minimal amount of maintenance this year and feel this has to do with chemical applied for dust control applied to the twelve miles of township roads. The town contracts with St. Louis County Public Works for snowplowing the township roads and there have been two accidents on S. Strand Lake road with a car hitting the snowplow. the town has been working on improving the visibility and has cut back the timber and brush 20 feet on each side and cut down one curve along the road. In 2008 we expect to work with St. Louis County to improve the road signs. The town is be looking into crushing gravel in the town gravel pit.

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CPSSD: Dennis Olsen reported on the Cotton Proper Subordinate Service District. The CPSSD is on hold it was not dissolved in hopes that the work may be utilized in the future. Since that time no work has been done. At the annual Board of Audit meeting funds were transferred from the Non Levy Revenue Fund to the CPSSD Fund in the amount of \$37,626.97 for the preliminary engineering report and all preliminary work due to surveying, coordinator, surveying, and land acquisition. The Board felt that it was work done by the township to see feasibility in the project and did not want to put that whole burden on the SSD.

Fiddle Contest & Festival: Terry Nelson discussed that the fiddle contest has been part of township for 27 years. It began at the Cotton Fire Department and then was turned over to the Civic Club. The contest and festival need financial help so it can keep going on each year. JoAnne Robich discussed if the town would be interested in taking over the festival and the Civic Club taking care of the contest. The Civic Club does not have the money or the man power needed to do the contest and festival. Sandi Nelson stated that Arrlette Krog attended the last board meeting and the discussed was to have everything stay under the Civic Club. There are two state statues that the township may be able to appropriate fund to the Civic Club. In the agenda packet is a copy of budget for the Fiddle Championship and options under state statutes 365.10 Subd. 17 and 471.941 that may assist the Civic Club. Much discussion followed. Discussed the town matching funds from the local businesses. Barb Leuelling motioned, supported by Terry Nelson to allow the town board the authority to fund the Minnesota State Old Time Fiddle Championship and Festival as an artistic festival with a cap of \$7,000 to include possible matching funding. Discussion. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED. JoAnne Robich asked if the town would take over the festival. Ken Meinke motioned, supported by George Nelson to have the Civic Club keep control of the fiddle festival for 2008. Discussion. MOTION CARRIED.

Setting of the town levy.

General Fund: The St. Louis Cty. levy form's General Fund includes the towns general fund, fire fund, Chronicle fund, cemetery old and new funds, community development fund, parks & rec fund, and capital projects fund. The current levy is \$84,892. Terry Nelson motioned, supported by Debbie Leppala that the General Fund levy stay same at \$84,892. Discussion. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Fire Fund: Debbie Leppala motioned, supported by Dennis Olsen to approve the \$24,000 Cotton Volunteer Fire Department 2008 contract year. Discussion. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED. The current levy is \$30,667. Terry Nelson motioned, supported by Dennis Olsen that the fire fund levy stay the same at \$30,667. Discussion. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Road Fund: The current levy is \$43,695. Terry Nelson motioned, supported by Dennis Olsen that the road fund stay the same at \$43,695. Discussion. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Total Cotton township levy for 2008 is \$159,254.

Contributions made by the Town throughout the year include: Meadowlands Ambulance Service, St. Louis County Rescue Squad, Arrowhead Transit, Cotton School Alcohol and Drug Free

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Graduation Party, Cotton Baseball Club, Cotton School Positive Options For Youth. Will Deyo motioned, supported by George Nelson to authorize the Town Board to contract for health, social and recreational services from nonprofit organizations up to \$10,000. Discussion. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

The following were duly elected March 11, 2007:

|                              |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Supervisor – three year term | Dennis Olsen     |
| Clerk – two year term        | Sandra S. Nelson |

Debbie Leppala motioned, supported by Will Deyo to hold the 2009 annual town meeting the second Tuesday in March at 8:30 p.m. (March 10, 2009). All in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Barb Leuelling gave an update on the Whiteface River flooding issues. In January 2008 the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission requested a flood impact study from Minnesota Power. The study to assess downstream flooding and possible means of alleviating flood impacts. Minnesota Power is requesting an extension to May 13 to complete the flood impact study.

As there was no further business, Ken Meinke motioned, supported by Debbie Leppala that the meeting be adjourned at 10:00 p.m. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

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Town Clerk